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## Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Lenoir County Awarded \$88,626 in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Funding

By CED Program Interns & Students

Article: <https://ced.sog.unc.edu/lenoir-county-awarded-88626-in-energy-efficiency-and-conservation-block-grant-funding/>

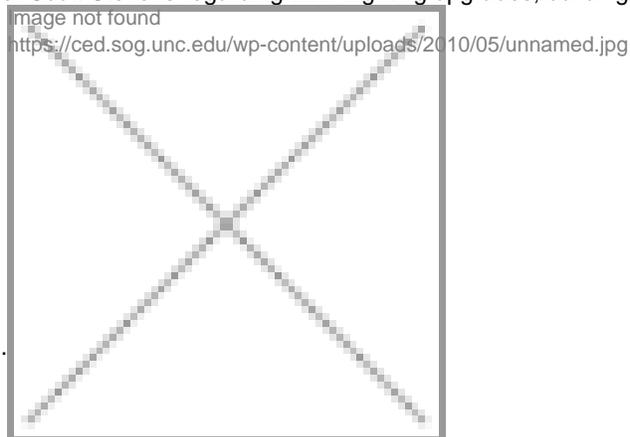
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Over the past year, Community Campus Partnership interns have studied and engaged in a number of energy-related activities for the City of Kinston and its Department of Public Services. On May 18th, Governor Bev Perdue announced \$4.9 million additional dollars to 52 local governments, including \$88,626 to the City of Kinston for lighting sensors, lighting upgrades, and climate control improvements.

Last summer, numerous efforts were undertaken to improve energy efficiency in the City of Kinston and Lenoir County. Discussions were held with City Manager Scott Stevens regarding LED Lighting upgrades, building improvements, and



simpler tasks such as replacing lighting.

A rough energy plan was completed with Kinston Public Services Analyst Ruth Tanner. Ruth and I surveyed the city's buildings, including City Hall, the Public Services Complex, Parks and Recreation, and several fire stations. We found a number of upgrades that could be completed to reduce the city's energy costs. A couple of the more interesting items surrounded lighting.

In City Hall, some lighting fixtures were impossible to turn off. The light switch functions were high and low-level light, but never could completely turn off. These were low-wattage fluorescent bulbs, yet were running 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. In addition, so were numerous exit signs that featured 60 watt incandescent light bulbs. In the Public Services Complex, we found large overhead lighting in the warehouse being run 24-hours a day, when only certain areas (such as the fleet maintenance bays) needed steady lighting throughout the day. In addition to these lighting fixes, we found numerous areas where air conditioning/heating HVAC units were operating at low efficiency, and identified those items for replacement.

After compiling this information, a utility usage baseline was collected from the city's buildings to compare with future outputs after upgrades were made. After collecting this information, Ruth took the lead in writing the grant and submitting it to the State Energy Office on behalf of the city. After receiving their allotted funds, the city will install motion sensors to activate lights in its buildings, LED Exit signage to replace its inefficient existing stock, and additional upgrades to HVAC units. In total, the city will receive \$88,626 to perform upgrades, as well as contributing around \$7,000 of its own funds.



Considerable savings are expected from these upgrades as well in the city's energy costs.

The Community Campus Partnership helped the City of Kinston to identify an area where improvement was possible. It helped identify a funding stream for that improvement and the requirements for that funding stream. Ruth and city staff took the lead filing the grant application and ultimately secured a win for the City of Kinston.